

# DHSS Seeks Comment on State Plan on Aging at Two Public Hearings This Month

NEW CASTLE (April 17, 2020) – The Delaware Department of Health and Social Services' Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities will seek public comment on its proposed State Plan on Aging for the period of October 2020 through September 2024.

The state plan has been developed to meet requirements under Title III and Title VII of the Older Americans Act. The act provides funding for a variety of programs and services for older Delawareans and their caregivers, including supportive services, nutrition programs, disease prevention and health promotion initiatives, elder rights protection activities and caregiver support programs.

The state hearings, to be held virtually due to COVID-19 public gathering restrictions, will provide an opportunity for the public to offer comments and suggestions on the plan. The schedule is:

- **April 20, 2020, 1-3 p.m.**

*Virtual Meeting*

*Information:*

*<https://zoom.us/j/570333700>*

*By phone: 1 (646) 876-9923.*

*Meeting ID: 570333700#*

*One tap mobile +16468769923,,570333700#*

- **April 22, 2020, 6-8 p.m.**

*Virtual Meeting*

*Information:*

*<https://zoom.us/j/551953654>*

*By phone: 1 (646) 876-9923.*

*Meeting ID: 551953654#*

*One tap mobile +16468769923,,551953654#*

A copy of the draft plan may be obtained by following the links on the division's website at: [dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dsaapd/index.html](https://dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dsaapd/index.html)

The nation's older population continues to increase in number, and Delaware's current and projected demographics align with this national trend. Today, nearly one in four Delawareans is age 60 or older. By the year 2040, Delawareans who are age 60 and older will make up one-third of the state's population, or more than 313,835 people. That same year, state's population of people age 85 and older is projected to have grown by 171.6% since 2015.

"Public input is essential to the development of Delaware's State Plan on Aging, to ensure that our programs, supports and services reflect the growing and changing needs of Delaware's older adult population," said DHSS Secretary Dr. Kara Odom Walker, a practicing family physician. "We know that you want to age well; have access to information, supports and person-centered services that respond to your individual needs; and continue to thrive in your homes and communities. We are asking you to partner with us in shaping what that will look like over the next four years."

The Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities will use the strategies in the State Plan on Aging to address the growing and changing needs of older Delawareans and persons with disabilities.

The 2020-2024 State Plan on Aging focuses on initiatives such as:

- Developing and implementing best practices in person-centered case management and coordination of services and supports.

- Collaborating with community partners to identify barriers, improve access, and facilitate coordination of cognitive health resources and services for persons with cognitive health needs.
- Leading the effort to become a dementia-friendly state, ensuring that communities throughout Delaware are equipped to support persons living with dementia and their caregivers.
- Promoting the development, expansion, and capacity of comprehensive and coordinated programs that serve and support caregivers.
- Developing a collaborative approach with other agencies, inclusive of a multi-disciplinary team, to strengthen the abuse, neglect and exploitation response across the Delaware aging network.
- Improving delivery of participant-directed services, empowering participants to make choices about service delivery.

Comments and suggestions on the Draft State Plan on Aging will be accepted until the close of business on Friday, May 8:

- By survey:  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DelawareStatePlanAgingPublicComments>
- By mail: DSAAPD Planning Unit, Department of Health and Social Services, 1901 N. DuPont Highway, Main Administration Building, First Floor Annex, New Castle, DE 19720
- By email: DelawareADRC@delaware.gov
- By fax: 302-255-4445